

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A shorts type disposable diaper comprising:

a liquid-permeable topsheet, a liquid-impermeable anti-leakage sheet, and a liquid-retentive absorbent core, and an exterior member adjacent said anti-leakage sheet, said exterior member comprised of an inner sheet adjacent said anti-leakage sheet and an outer sheet adjacent said inner sheet;

a body-surrounding portion which is located between a waist opening portion and a leg opening portion of the diaper, which body-surrounding portion corresponds to a body portion of a diaper wearer to be surrounded by said diaper that exists between the waist and legs of said diaper wearer,

a pair of cuffs or flaps of a breathable liquid-resistant or liquid-impermeable material provided on lateral sides of the absorbent core, with each cuff or flap having one longitudinal end thereof fixed to the liquid-permeable topsheet over the length of the absorbent core and having the other longitudinal end thereof free, with said body-surrounding portion of the diaper containing side portions and opposing end portions,

and a plurality of body-surrounding elastic members provided at the body-surrounding portion of the diaper, with said body-surrounding elastic members extending in a circumferential width direction of the diaper, at least a portion of said body-

surrounding elastic members extending laterally across the lateral extent of each end portion of said diaper, and at least a portion of said elastic members extending laterally from and at a position substantially co-extensive with each end of said absorbent core, with each said end of said absorbent core terminating at a position short of an end portion of the diaper;

wherein:

said plurality of body-surrounding elastic members are fixedly disposed at least at each of said side portions of said diaper, and which body-surrounding elastic members extend in the circumferential width direction of the diaper and outward in a stretched state from longitudinal side edges of said absorbent core, and thereby manifest elastic contractibility at said side portions of the diaper, provided that:

(1) the body-surrounding elastic members are not disposed in at least a center portion of said body-surrounding portion of the diaper where said absorbent core exists, and

(2) the body-surrounding elastic members are each secured in their stretched state at the side portions of said body-surrounding portion of the diaper to thereby manifest contractibility, with the body-surrounding elastic members being both disposed between and joined to ~~an~~ said inner sheet and ~~an~~ said outer sheet of ~~an~~ said exterior member of said diaper, and the body-surrounding elastic

members thereby forming gathers at the side portions of said body-surrounding portion of the diaper;

wherein said body-surrounding elastic members are cut at their center position in the diaper width position, so that said body-surrounding elastic members are not disposed in at least the center of the portion of the diaper where the absorbent core exists,

opposing ends of said exterior member extending beyond and folded over and onto each opposite end of said absorbent core, and

wherein said each of said cuffs or flaps extend between and terminate at the ends of said absorbent core with said ends of said exterior member being folded onto ends of said cuffs.

2. **(Currently Amended)** A shorts type disposable diaper comprising:

a liquid-permeable topsheet, a liquid-impermeable anti-leakage sheet, and a liquid-retentive absorbent core, and an exterior member adjacent said anti-leakage sheet, said exterior member comprised of an inner sheet adjacent said anti-leakage sheet and an outer sheet adjacent said inner sheet;

a body-surrounding portion which is located between a waist opening portion and a leg opening portion of the diaper, which body-surrounding portion corresponds to a body portion of a diaper wearer to be surrounded by said diaper that exists between the waist and legs of said diaper wearer,

a pair of cuffs or flaps of a breathable liquid-resistant or liquid-impermeable material provided on lateral sides of the absorbent core, with each cuff or flap having one longitudinal end thereof fixed to the liquid-permeable topsheet over the length of the absorbent core and having the other longitudinal end thereof free, with said body-surrounding portion of the diaper containing side portions and opposing end portions,

and a plurality of body-surrounding elastic members provided at the body-surrounding portion of the diaper, with said body-surrounding elastic members extending in a circumferential width direction of the diaper, at least a portion of said body-surrounding elastic members extending laterally across the lateral extent of each end portion of said diaper, and at least a portion of said elastic members extending laterally from and at a position substantially co-extensive with each end of said absorbent core, with each said end of said absorbent core terminating at a position short of an end portion of the diaper; wherein:

said plurality of body-surrounding elastic members are fixedly disposed at least at each of said side portions of said diaper, and which body-surrounding elastic members extend in the circumferential width direction of the diaper and outward in a stretched state from longitudinal side edges of said absorbent core, and thereby manifest elastic contractibility at said side portions of the diaper, provided that:

(1) the body-surrounding elastic members are not disposed in at least a center portion of said body-surrounding portion of the diaper where said absorbent core exists, and

(2) the body-surrounding elastic members are each secured in their stretched state at the side portions of said body-surrounding portion of the diaper to thereby manifest contractibility;

wherein said body-surrounding elastic members (i) are disposed between ~~an~~ said outer sheet which constitutes an outermost surface of said diaper and said ~~anti-leakage~~ inner sheet, and (ii) form gathers at the side portions of said body-surrounding portion of the diaper;

wherein said body-surrounding elastic members are cut at their center position in the diaper width position, so that said body-surrounding elastic members are not disposed in at least the center of the portion of the diaper where the absorbent core exists,

opposing ends of said exterior member extending beyond and folded over and onto each opposite end of said absorbent core, and

wherein said each of said cuffs or flaps extend between and terminate at the ends of said absorbent core with said ends of said exterior member being folded onto ends of said cuffs.

3. (Previously Presented) The shorts type disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein:

said diaper comprises an absorbent body containing said topsheet, said anti-leakage sheet and said absorbent core and said exterior member containing the inner sheet and the outer sheet,

said exterior member being disposed on a side of said absorbent body having said anti-leakage sheet, and said absorbent body and said exterior member are fixed together by partial bonding.

4. (Previously Presented) The shorts type disposable diaper according to claim 1 or 2, wherein:

an elastic member which extends in the circumferential width direction of the diaper is fixedly disposed in the waist opening portion, and

a 30% elongation stress of said waist opening portion is greater than a 30% elongation stress of said body-surrounding portion of the diaper where said body-surrounding elastic members are disposed.

5. (Previously Presented) The shorts type disposable diaper according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said absorbent core has a Taber stiffness of 0.5 to 20 gf·cm.

6. (Previously Presented) The shorts type disposable diaper according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said body-surrounding elastic

members have inward ends that are slightly overlapping with the longitudinal side edges of the absorbent core.

7. (Previously Presented) The shorts type disposable diaper according to claim 1 or 2,

wherein a ratio of a width of said absorbent core to a width of said diaper at a position where said body-surrounding elastic members are disposed is 30 to 60%, when the diaper is laid on a flat surface, and

wherein a ratio of a width of portions of said diaper that contain therein said elastic members that manifest elastic contractibility to the width of said diaper where elastic members are disposed is 40 to 95%, when the diaper is laid on a flat surface.

8. (Previously Presented) The shorts type disposable diaper according to claim 4, wherein the ratio of the 30% elongation stress of the waist opening portion to the 30% elongation stress of the body-surrounding portion of the diaper is 1.5 to 6.0.